

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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SUBJ: STATE/COMMERCE COOPERATION ON COMMERCIAL PROGRAM

REF: A) STATE 141993 B) SINGAPORE A-111 C) SINGAPORE 1262

D) SINGAPORE 1273

FOLLOWING SUBJECTS RELATED TO STATE/COMMERCE COOPERATION
AND IMPROVEMENT COMMERCIAL SERVICES OFFERED FOR POSSIBLE
INCLUSION WASHINGTON DISCUSSIONS REFERRED TO REF A.

1. EMBASSY HAS COMMENTED PREVIOUSLY ON POSTS' NEED FOR
EXPERT GUIDANCE IN DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN INFORMATION
SYSTEM (SEE REF C AND REF D). SINCE POSTS' NEEDS VARY,
WE DO NOT THINK GENERAL WRITTEN GUIDANCE THIS SUBJECT
WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL. WHAT WOULD BE HELPFUL WOULD BE
DESPATCH OF TEAM OF EXPERIENCED INFORMATION SPECIALISTS
TO KEY COMMERCIAL POSTS TO STUDY NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES
OF EACH POST TO IMPROVE INFORMATION STORAGE, RETRIEVAL
AND DISSEMINATION SYSTEMS. TEAM COULD ALSO SUGGEST NEW
INFORMATION HANDLING EQUIPMENT APPROPRIATE TO EACH POST
TO ELIMINATE THE RUBE GOLDBERG DO-IT-YOURSELF APPROACH
WE HAVE AT THE PRESENT TIME. FOR EXAMPLE, WE HAVE HAD
AN INFORMAL OFFER FROM EMBASSY BANGKOK TO TAKE TIME ON
THEIR COMPUTER SET-UP WHICH APPARENTLY HAS CAPACITY
EXCESSIVE TO THEIR NEEDS. THIS SOUND ATTRACTIVE, BUT WE
DON'T HAVE A CLUE HOW WE CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OFFER.
A SPECIALIST COULD TELL US.
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2. CLOSELY RELATED IS PROBLEM OF COMMERCIAL LIBRARY.
POST LIBRARIES LINKED WITH MODERN INFORMATION SYSTEM
SHOULD BE ABLE TO PLAY MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN TRADE PROMO-
TION (REF B). INFORMATION TEAM MENTIONED ABOVE COULD

ASSIST POSTS IN INTEGRATING LIBRARY INTO TOTAL COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS AS WELL AS HELP POSTS LAY OUT AND DESIGN ATTRACTIVE, FUNCTIONAL LIBRARIES. LIBRARY UNIT COULD BE FORMED IN WASHINGTON CAPABLE OF PROVIDING BACK-UP AND GUIDANCE NECESSARY. UPON SUBMISSION OF MARKET SECTOR ANALYSIS BY POSTS, UNIT SHOULD BE ABLE TO SUGGEST PERIODICALS AND REFERENCE WORKS APPROPRIATE TO MARKET. INITIAL SUGGESTIONS FOR LIBRARY PUBLICATIONS COULD BE SUPPLEMENTED BY MONTHLY LISTS OF RELEVANT NEW PUBLICATIONS SIMILAR TO USIA PROGRAM. PROGRAM SHOULD BE ADEQUATELY FUNDED AND EACH POST GIVEN FULL DISCRETION IN USE FUNDS FOR PROCUREMENT PUBLICATIONS RELEVANT THEIR PARTICULAR NEEDS. IN MANY CASES, TRAINING FOR POST LIBRARIANS MIGHT BE NEEDED. ADVANTAGES OF INTEGRATING COMMERCIAL LIBRARY WITH USIS LIBRARY OR RESOURCE CENTER, WHICH HAS BEEN DONE EXPERIMENTALLY HERE, SHOULD BE THOROUGHLY EXPLORED. OVERALL OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE SYSTEM WHICH WOULD ENSURE PUBLISHED MATERIALS RELEVANT TO EACH POST'S KEY PRODUCT AREAS OR GENERAL THEMES (SUCH AS URBAN RENEWAL, POLLUTION, MRT) ARE AVAILABLE AT POST ON TIMELY BASIS AND THAT LIBRARY FACILITY BE ABLE TO DISEMINATE AND ADVERTISE AVAILABILITY THESE MATERIALS TO TARGET AUDIENCES IN EFFICIENT AND TIMELY FASHION.

3. FSO AND FSL TRAINING IN COMMERCIAL FIELD IS, IN OUR JUDGEMENT, WOEFULLY INADEQUATE. WHILE PRESENT FSI SIX-MONTH ECON COURSE VERY USEFUL, WE BELIEVE EACH NEWLY ASSIGNED COMMERCIAL OFFICER SHOULD BE EXPOSED TO INTENSIVE ECON/COMMERCIAL TRAINING PROGRAMS BEFORE DEPARTING FOR POST INSTEAD OF RATHER HIT AND MISS PROGRAM WE HAVE TODAY. FSI WOULD PROBABLY BE BEST LOCUS FOR SUCH PROGRAM MAKING EXTENSIVE USE OF DEPARTMENT COMMERCE AND PRIVATE SPECIALISTS. REFERESHER ECON/COMMERCIAL TRAINING SHOULD ALSO BE EXPANDED AND IMPROVED FOR MID-CAREER OR MORE SENIOR OFFICERS. FSL'S ALSO SHOULD RECEIVE TRAINING IN US ON SELECTIVE BASIS (PERHAPS IN SAME FSI COURSE) --
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NOT AS REWARD FOR GOOD AND LOYAL SERVICE BUT TO ACQUAINT THEM WITH MODERN APPROACH TO COMMERCIAL PROMOTION. THIS, IN OUR JUDGEMENT, WOULD BE A GOOD INVESTMENT.

4. FSO'S TOO FREQUENTLY HAVE TO PERFORM FUNCTIONS FSL'S COULD DO AS WELL OR BETTER. WHILE HOPEFULLY MORE MODERN INFORMATION SYSTEM SHOULD FREE FSO'S AND FSL'S FROM SOME OF THE BURDENSOME ROUTINE, WE BELIEVE REQUIREMENT WILL STILL EXIST FOR FAIRLY EXTENSIVE AUGMENTATION OF FSL STAFFING, TO FREE FSO'S FOR MORE ACTIVE PROMOTIONAL WORK. WE ALSO BELIEVE MORE ATTENTION NEEDS TO BE PAID TO RECRUITMENT AND PAY OF PROFESSIONALLY QUALIFIED FSL'S AND THAT THEIR ROLE IN OVERALL PROGRAM SHOULD BE ENHANCED. MORE SUBSTANTIVE JOBS, COCOUPLED

WITH PROSPECT FOR TRAINING IN US, WOULD ENABLE EMBASSIES TO HIRE, DEVELOP AND MOTIVATE GOOD TALENT THAT IS AVAILABLE. WE ALSO BELIEVE GREATER USE SHOULD BE MADE OF CONTRACTUAL SERVICES AND MORE ELABORATE FEE SYSTEM WOULD HELP FREE FSO AND FSL TIME FOR OTHER WORK.

5. WE HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH RESULTS OF FIELD OFFICE PROCUREMENT FOR TRADE PROMOTION EVENTS. PERSONAL CONTACT HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY USEFUL IN OBTAINING NEW-TO-MARKET FIRMS. FIELD OFFICES SHOULD BE STAFFED TO PERFORM FUNCTION REGULARLY. IN ORDER TO BETTER PREPARE FIELD OFFICE REPS TO STIMULATE MANUFACTURERS, THEY SHOULD BE ASSIGNED MORE FREQUENTLY TO CONDUCT MARKET RESEARCH ABROAD AND TO DIRECT TRADE MISSIONS. MARKET RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY PORTLAND FIELD OFFICE REP INTO SOUTHEAST ASIA LOGGING MARKET WAS DIRECTLY RELATED TO SUCCESS OF FIRST MAJOR TRADE EXHIBITION HELD IN SINGAPORE. AFTER RETURNING TO US HE WAS ABLE TO GIVE CONVINCING PERSONAL ACCOUNTS AND DETAILED MARKET KNOWLEDGE TO POTENTIAL EXPORTERS WHICH RESULTED IN EXTRAORDINARILY SUCCESSFUL PROCUREMENT. THIS EXPERIENCE CAN BE GENERALIZED. WHILE NOT ALL FIELD OFFICES HAVE INDUSTRY CONCENTRATIONS COMPARABLE TO PACIFIC NORTHWEST IN WOOD INDUSTRIES, THERE ARE SEVERAL CONCENTRATIONS AND THERE ARE ALSO USDOC INDUSTRY EXPERTS WHO COULD CONDUCT RESEARCH AND TAKE LEAD PROCUREMENT EFFORT.

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6. FIELD OFFICES MIGHT BENEFIT FROM MORE ELABORATE FEE SYSTEM TO ENABLE THEM TO PROVIDE GREATER RANGE OF SERVICES BUSINESSMEN REQUIRE OR WANT. OMB STUDY MAY BE UNREALISTIC IN URGING FIELD OFFICES TO MERELY USE BETTER JUDGEMENT IN PROVIDING SERVICES AND IN ASKING THEM TO EXPLAIN POST LIMITATIONS. SHOULD MORE ELABORATE FEE SYSTEM BE STUDIED, FEASIBILITY OF HAVING POSTS CHARGE FEES DIRECTLY SHOULD ALSO BE CONSIDERED SO THAT US RESIDENT BUSINESSMEN DO NOT (TOO FREQUENTLY SUCCESSFULLY) CIRCUMVENT MORE APPROPRIATE FIRST CONTACT WITH FIELD OFFICE.

7. FIELD OFFICES MIGHT BE MORE EFFECTIVE IN EXPORT PROMOTION EFFORT IF THEIR TRAINING WERE INTEGRATED INTO FOREIGN SERVICE SYSTEM (PARA 3 ABOVE) AND IF OPPORTUNITIES WERE PROVIDED FOR EXCHANGES BETWEEN FIELD OFFICES AND POSTS. SHARED TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE SHOULD LEAD TO BETTER COMMUNICATION AND MORE EFFECTIVE EXPORT PROMOTION.

8. IN ORDER TO EXPAND RESOURCES AND BROADEN COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM, GREATER USE SHOULD BE MADE OF OUR NATURAL ALLIES IN PRIVATE SECTOR: BANKS, AIRLINES, TRAVEL AGENTS AND SHIPPERS. INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENTS OF BANKS, FOR

EXAMPLE, ARE REPOSITORIES OF CONSIDERABLE MARKET KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNICAL EXPORT EXPERTISE. GREATER USE COULD BE MADE OF THEM BY BUSINESSMEN, POSTS AND BY FIELD OFFICE REPS. AT USAQUIP, FOR EXAMPLE, WE WERE IMPRESSED BY EXPORT EFFORTS OF FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF OREGON. BANK REPRESENTED SOME 24 DIFFERENT OREGON COMPANIES, MOSTLY NEW-TO-MARKET, AND GENERATED CONSIDERABLE BUSINESS FOR ITS CLIENTS. BANK ESTIMATES \$11 MILLION SALES NEXT 12 MONTHS DIRECTLY RESULT THEIR EFFORTS. BELIEVE WE SHOULD EXPLORE POSSIBILITY WORKING MORE ACTIVELY WITH INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENTS OF BANKS TO GET THEM MORE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN EXPORT EXPANSION AND DISSEMINATION OF MARKET INFORMATION. THEY COULD BE VERY USEFUL IN ENCOURAGING COMPANIES WHO ARE RELUCTANT TO EXPLORE EXPORT MARKETS FOR LACK OF EXPERIENCE OR UNWILLINGNESS MAKE INITIAL OUTLAY IN TIME AND PERSONNEL.

9. LASTLY, STATE/COMMERCE/FIELD INFORMATION AND
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COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM SHOULD BE LOOKED AT FROM TECHNICAL STANDPOINT. COMMUNICATIONS TOO FREQUENTLY BREAK DOWN OR ARE SIMPLY TOO SLOW. PROBLEM MAY BE TECHNICAL ONE OF EQUIPMENT OR SIMPLY LACK OF SUFFICIENT CLERICAL PERSONNEL IN WASHINGTON. WE FREQUENTLY WAIT WEEKS FOR WHAT SHOULD BE ROUTINE ANSWERS TO QUERIES. GIVEN THE PRIORITY WE ATTACH TO COMMERICAL WORK, OUR COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM SHOULD BE MUCH MORE RESPONSIVE.
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